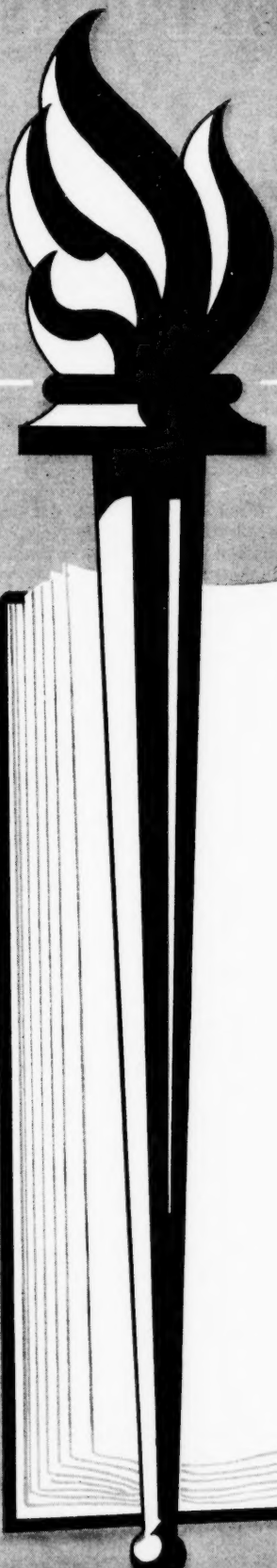


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



The Man Called Satan

WE CAN AFFORD TO WAIT

ARE WE LOSING OUR SHINE?

THINKING VICTORY

THE DRAMA OF LIFE

A HEALTHY SHADOW

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

START WHERE YOU STAND

Megiddo Message

Vol. 48, No. 14

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Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor

A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone, The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will.

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- Answer perplexing religious questions
- Give you courage for these uncertain times
- Help you live above the world's moral corruption
- Reveal to you how to develop a character acceptable to God
- Bring peace and stability to your life

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A Healing Balm

Dear Friend:

We must give up all our own ways and habits and work very hard to become made over new, so we can gain life everlasting. But with each new accomplishment, what joy! Only a fellow worker would understand this.

We must start at the bottom of the ladder and learn to work and endure our trials, in some of the smaller things, and prepare and gain strength for some of the more difficult tasks as they come along.

This is a chosen profession of ours that will take up all our time and energy. Certainly, if we want to be made over new, and be found worthy of this gift, we will "roll up our shirt sleeves and prepare for work," as the saying goes.

In all chosen fields, people start at the bottom and spend years of study and toil for temporary honors. They sacrifice and deny themselves of many things; and as in all things of this life, not knowing if their efforts will be worth it. They do not know if their life will be spared long enough to enjoy their rewards.

We can be very sure our lives will be spared long enough to be given the opportunity to fulfill our promise to Him. Also, we know our reward is certain, for God is the paymaster. We are promised instruction along the way; let us be ready to obey.

Indeed, it is a great blessing to be free from error and to know the truth; for the truth will make us free.

Canastota, N. Y.

R. C. J.

There is Sunshine

Dear Sister:

Do we not find all trials "multiple"? At least I seem to find the old saying true, "When it rains it pours." Yet if we will, we find between such downpours there is sunshine and however short its duration it can bless us if we have a grateful heart. Someone stated, "The clouds do not totally obscure the sun, [Sum of righteousness,] for the more we look into the law of liberty, the brighter this Sun [Word] is to us. Then the multiple trials fade away to naught; and His words become a pillow for our spiritually-minded head. Even the stones will be less hard to rest on! Why not? They are only for this life, and only seem real. Eternity's joys are multiplied billions and billions of times more, and are truly real. Though our eyes have not yet seen, nor our ear heard, nor our heart perceived the things God has promised to those who are now bearing the precious fruits of the spirit.

Be obedient to God's Word. It is hard to kick against the pricks. The Word can be a river of peace; but if doing wrong it can be a very sharp barb, the very thing needed to turn us about, to do right again. Then peace will flow like a river.

Allenville, Ill.

Mrs. L. W.

The Man Called Satan (Conc.)

The Words "Devil" and "Satan" Defined

THE WORDS Satan and Devil, as used in the languages in which God spake to man, have no such ideas attached to them as is given by the theology of the day. The word "Satan" means: "an adversary, an opposer"; but false teaching has attached to the word ideas which it was never meant to convey. It has mystified the meaning of the original word and given countenance to the old satanic theory, when there is nothing in the Bible to support it. In Matt. 16: 23 Jesus showed how a man becomes a devil by opposing His words—by being in opposition, by being an adversary. Peter said to Jesus: "Lord: this shall not be unto thee," and Jesus said unto him: "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me." It was a man in the person of Peter that became a satan by his opposition.

The Greek word *diabolos* means an "accuser, calumniator," one who defames or reviles. It was the word "diabolos" that Jesus employed in John 6: 70 when He said of Judas, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" We should observe that Jesus said, "one of you is a devil," not one of you is possessed of the devil. A devil is a wicked man, not an all-powerful monster with powers equal to the Almighty Himself. Peter became a satan by opposing Jesus; Judas became a devil by betraying his Master, by allowing his covetousness to rule and govern him. It was the thirty pieces of silver that enticed him to betray Jesus. He thought that the Lord would escape and he would have the money. The fact that he afterward threw the money down at the high priests' feet and went and hanged himself, demonstrated that he had no evil intent against his Master. We read also of devils, plural. Evil men are numerous, hence could easily be in plural form. But there is only one God, and if He has as a counterpart, one supreme cause of evil, then he also should be singular, not plural. But we read in James 2: 19, "The devils also believe and tremble." Let us identify one such devil. We find him alluded to in Acts 24: 25. As Paul "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled," but works of righteousness did not follow. As many another sinner, he waited for a more convenient season.

Paul had a longing desire to visit his brethren at Thessalonica, and he wrote to them in the following manner: "Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us" (I Thess. 2: 18). Who obstructed Paul's travels? Let us identify the Satan in the case. It was no one but his enemies, those who opposed his preaching of the gospel of Christ. On several occasions they watched the gates of the city to apprehend him and take his life. Once they stoned him and left him for dead; at another time, forty men vowed that they would neither eat nor drink until they had taken his life. We can readily perceive who the Satan was that hindered him.

The devil of popular theology took no part in the opposition which Paul encountered. Who ever heard of one of Milton's fallen angels stopping him in the way and hindering his progress? No reasonable person can fail

to observe that wicked men were the Satan that hindered him in every instance. The enemy is spoken of again in Rev. 2: 10: "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried." No one reading this text—unless he had been brain-washed—would get the idea that the monster from the infernal regions would come forth and put the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus into prison cells. He would know it referred to someone in rule and authority; someone who had power to close or open the prison doors, as Herod did when he imprisoned John, and later beheaded him.

Some devils of this type greatly hindered Paul and Silas in their travels, when they cast them into the "inner prison," and made their feet fast in the stocks. People can reason in these cases and well know that no one who was powerless to carry out the work would be the instrument used. Why will they not reason as well on the nature of the devil that took Jesus up to the pinnacle of the temple and to the top of a high mountain and offered Him all that His eye could behold if He would do him homage?

The Devil that Tempted Jesus. Who Was He?

The temptation of Jesus is usually brought up to prove the certainty of the existence of a personal devil. A moment's reflection dissipates this impression. If Judas could be a devil, and yet be a man, why could not the tempter of Jesus be a man? His being called a devil proves nothing, for we have already called your attention to the fact that a devil in the person of Herod cast John the Baptist into prison and afterward beheaded him, and that devils cast Paul and others into prison, but they were always men, and not some all-powerful monster who was acting as God's counterpart.

When a devil, in the person of a former Herod, heard that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, "he was greatly troubled," and he became so enraged when he could not find the child that he sent "and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under." Was he not an extremely cruel devil?

What caused him to be so bitter against the Baby Jesus? The conviction was widespread that the Messiah, the heir to the throne of David, was to be born, and Herod, fearing for his own authority, sought to end the life of the youthful heir to the throne. Thirty years later, Jesus, having reached the age when His great mission was to begin, stepped forth from His secluded home in Nazareth to perform mighty signs and wonders. The tradition of the Messiah who should put down all kings on earth and exalt Himself as universal ruler, was spreading at this period, and at the time of the temptation the fame of Jesus as the claimant to the Messiahship was beginning to spread. At this time another Herod was in power, but do you not suppose that he was aware of the events of thirty years before, and wished to make terms with this rapidly-rising star in Judea? The devil or tempter in this case was most certainly Herod or someone acting in his place.

We may wonder how he could take Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple, for it would require more than human power to transport a man through the air to the top of a

tail steeple. But the answer is simple. The pinnacle of the temple, as we are informed by Josephus, was an elevated court or promenade, which on one side overlooked the valley of Jehoshaphat. The enemy also took Jesus up on a high mountain. The fact of ascending a mountain to see what could be witnessed, shows that the field of vision was in proportion to the altitude. The tract of country to be seen would be Judea, and the offer of power would relate to that country.

The enemy did not understand that the prophecies concerning the Messiah who was to put down all kings of earth and be exalted as universal Ruler were not to be fulfilled until Christ's second coming, therefore he endeavored to induce Jesus to do him homage. That this tempter had the power to allot the provinces of the Roman Empire proves that he must have been a Roman prince, and not the devil of heathen mythology. This devil or enemy that tempted Jesus was one who could walk and talk and was visible to the eye, a real being, as real as are the devils of today—men and women who in every avenue of life are endeavoring to lead others in the ways of sin and folly, to destruction. How reasonable and plain this occurrence becomes when divested of the false ideas with which the pagan doctrine of a monster of darkness has surrounded it! The enemies of our Master tried in many ways to tempt Him. It is written, "And they sent unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words" (Mark 12: 13).

This offer of power was a temptation to Jesus, but He did not yield to it. The offer of a high position in this life would be a temptation to almost any man, and Jesus was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4: 15). Hence with His superior abilities the offer of power was a temptation to Him, but in each instance He had the ready answer, "It is written." Let us add the courage to always answer as did He.

The Devil that Sowed the Tares

In Matthew 13 we find Jesus' parable of the tares sown among the wheat in the wheat field. An enemy had sown the tares. From v. 36 we learn that after Jesus had sent the multitude away, His disciples came to Him, saying, "Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field." And "he . . . said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one." (The word "one" is added, it does not appear in the Greek. Two of the modern versions read as follows: "the weeds are the wicked," "the tares are the sons of evil.") "The enemy that sowed them is the devil" (vs. 37, 38).

We agree that the seed is not literal, that the sower of the good seed is not an individual man, hence the sower of the tares cannot be a personal devil. Like begets like, hence if the tares are the sons of evil, the devil that sowed them must be fathers of evil. The answer is obvious, the devil represents evil men.

"O Lucifer, Son of the Morning"

People who are inclined to agree with Milton's doctrine of "*paradise lost*," that in some way once bright angels fell from the high courts of heaven, refer to Isa. 14: 12 as proving their theory. The text reads: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which did weaken

the nations!" Is it possible that God would ask us to believe that one who is found worthy to become an holy angel, and be clothed with immortality, could turn again and rebel against the Eternal Creator who had lifted him to such a high estate? If an angel can fall from such an exalted position, what assurance could you or I have that after being made equal to the angels a like cataclysm might not overtake us? But no, such a thing is unthinkable, it is impossible, it is unscriptural. If one could rebel after being saved and given immortality then the promise of Isa. 45: 17 is untrue: "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an *everlasting salvation*: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."

The context in Isaiah 14: 12 makes it very plain who this Lucifer was, and from what heaven he fell. We are plainly told in v. 4: "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased!" Against whom is this proverb to be taken up? Against the king of Babylon, and no one else. And in v. 16 we read plainly, "They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the *man* that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?" This Lucifer was a man, and that man the king of Babylon, as is plainly stated. And from what heaven did he fall? From the political heaven, he fell from power, he became weak as one of the common people (v. 10). Could anything be plainer than this, when we let the Almighty put in His own qualifying terms?

Who Provoked David to Number Israel?

The Jehovah's Witnesses and others hold the belief that the devil is a superbeing that can provoke men to evil. However such a theory cannot be the truth of the matter for it would flatly contradict other plain Biblical statements. In Mark 13 Jesus stated plainly that nothing from without entering into a man can defile him, but only the thirteen evils from within. And James states explicitly that God does not tempt anyone, but "every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust."

Now if a superbeing called Satan stood up against Israel and provoked King David to number them in defiance of God's orders, then Jesus told an untruth when He said nothing from without entering into a man can defile him. And James lied when he said "every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust." To be sure something provoked David to sin. It could have been himself or some other individual. The king's order was abominable to Joab, the chief captain of the Army, hence he could not have influenced David to take the census. And there is no record of any other person influencing the king. We will let David speak for himself: "Is it not *I* that commanded the people to be numbered? even *I* it is that have sinned and done evil indeed" (I Chron. 21: 17). We see then that it was David's own pride that was the Satan in the case, it was his desire to know how great the nation under him had become that prompted him to number them. "Even *I* it is that have sinned."

Let us consider the "Satan" that figured in the controversy about Job. Bible students agree that Job is a parable, a story, Job himself being the author. There is no reason why he should not have used himself as the central figure to build his story around. The other characters represent intimates in the Christian's struggle for self-mastery, some ready to help, others to hinder. But

one thing is certain, whoever this Satan or adversary may have been he was able to walk and talk with the people of Job's day, and that is more than the Satan of popular belief can do.

Job 2: 1 reads; "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord." These "sons of God" were not some celestial beings, but the loyal servants of Jehovah. John said to a group of his followers, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." The loyal servants of God came together, and the unfaithful servants came in their midst. There is nothing unusual or singular about this procedure. This drama has been re-enacted times without number over the ages. In fact it is the usual experience for the sons of God and their adversaries to assemble at the same time and place. The two classes, indicated as "sheep and goats," "wheat and tares," "righteous and wicked," will continue to appear together before God until they are separated at Judgment Day.

The Bible speaks of Cain and Abel. Ten of the spies Moses sent to spy out the land of Canaan proved satans, adversaries to God's purpose, and they brought back an evil report, while only two brought back a favorable report. There were Elijah and Ahab, Saul and Samuel, King David and his erstwhile companion who at one time had been his guide and close acquaintance, but became his arch enemy. David said: "We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company" (Ps. 55: 12-14). Demas was even in the yoke with Paul and then proved a traitor. At the last supper Satan was there. In this case the Satan was a man named Judas. And he planned the betrayal of his Master, quite similar to the destructive work done by Satan in Job's parable.

How to Conquer the Devil

To conquer the devil we need only to conquer the evils in our own hearts. Paul shows us how to fight the devil and banish him from our lives. He says: "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." Paul is in harmony with Jesus, for the first great evil that Jesus named as defiling a man is evil thoughts, and that is the enemy we have to fight against and cast down; not a demon with horns and hoofs. Thank God, we have mighty weapons, this wonderful Word of the Lord, which is "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword . . . and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." We must accept the thoughts of the Almighty, and cast down our own vain thoughts or imaginations (reasonings, as it reads in the margin) and become reconciled to God; then the devil will be gone (II Cor. 10: 4, 5; Heb. 4: 12).

Can we not, for the joy that is set before us—to be happy now and through a gladsome eternity—cast the devil out of our hearts and homes by resisting every temptation to evil? God is all-wise and merciful and asks us to do only that which will make us more happy in this life and gain for us joys supernal in the wonderland of glory. We are commanded to cast away all the evil thoughts, and we are told what to fill our minds with in their place. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are

true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

Let us fill our minds with thoughts of things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, and there will be no room left for the devil. "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4: 8, 9). When our feet are about to stumble on the dark mountains, and the shadow of death hovers near, what would we not give to have the peace of God with us, and to know that His mighty hand will rend the tomb, and bestow upon us a life that will never end, nevermore to taste of sorrow or death? With the Prophet we can exclaim, "O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea" (Isa. 48: 18).

To be saved we must resist the devil, and to resist the devil is to resist sin in any and all of its manifestations, and Eph. 6: 11 provides the formula: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." So long as people believe they must resist an imaginary being, and fail to look to the offender right inside their own heart, they will never attain perfection in the divine life. Once we realize what the Bible devil is then we can be taught how to resist him and come off more than conquerors in the conflict. You cannot resist the devil without having on the breastplate of righteousness, and that is to know and do all God's commandments.

Almost the last words of the Bible are: "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The Winner

The man who wins has aches and pains
And sometimes loss to bear,
Before the victory he gains
Of grief he gets his share.

Hard luck is something that he knows
And likewise fear and doubt,
For he has suffered all the woes
The quitters whine about.

The man who wins fatigue has known,
And sometimes failure, too;
On him the bitter winds have blown,
But he has braved them through.
He knows the hardships, one by one,
Along the battle line,
But he has won by keeping on
When quitters stopped to whine.

The man who wins succeeds in spite
Of hopes that go astray,
Against the odds he's had to fight
And trudge his up-hill way.
To gain the prize that victory brings,
With strength and courage stout,
He's had to overcome the things
The quitters whine about.

We Can Afford To Wait

IT IS COMMON among all people to want to hasten the arrival of the good things in life. To a child looking forward to receiving some special reward for extra well-doing, time seems as the passing of eternity. Many people are willing to plan and save for a year, in anticipation of the time when they may travel some distance to see loved relatives, friends, or perhaps some of the enchanting wonders of nature. Youth can hardly wait to reach the pinnacle of life in the distant haze. The passing of time, however, is as changeless as its Creator. The unhurried sands in the hour-glass, or the sun in its immutable course, seem but to mock the impatience of mortality.

We have nothing to do with our appearance in the plan of the ages, but life, be it long or short, is a continuous opportunity to mold ourselves into just the likeness we choose. Even the All-wise Creator, desirous of filling the measureless immensity of space with worlds inhabited by people willing to conform to His standards, gives to all mankind the right to spend their mortal years as they prefer. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," is His decree. He is willing to wait, not for a few short years only, but for millenniums of time, while out of the great reservoir of humanity He selects a very few souls who are willing to sacrifice the fleeting present for the eternal future. But the sacrifice is in reality a blessing in disguise.

We have the Word of God, which is the only knowledge in existence, that can enable us to free ourselves from ourselves. We need no longer remain slaves to our natural desires which have brought the world to its present desperate condition. We can free ourselves from the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, if we will do it. We can conquer dishonesty, selfishness and greed. We can learn to rule and govern our natural disposition composed of so much that is not good. We can see through the eye of faith beyond the disappointments and frustrations, beyond the partings and bereavements which are the inevitable lot of all humanity. And this is a sacrifice? Far from it. It is the hundredfold which Jesus promised would come in this present life.

The multitudes are not willing to trust in what they consider an uncertain future. They feel they should get while the getting is good. They cannot afford to wait.

Nothing is more uncertain than the present, with sickness, accident, misfortune, and even death ever ready to make an unwelcome appearance. Life's richest blessings and greatest promises come from an All-wise Creator who in turn holds the key to the future. He tells us we cannot serve Him and mammon, or human selfishness, at the same time. It is plain to be seen that many of our natural desires are not good. Without restraint we become worse than animals.

A carefully controlled body and mind is the simple solution to the complex problems of the world today. It brings the hundredfold in this present life and in "the world to come" life everlasting. While we live there will always be room for improvement, always room for greater self-conquest.

Let us not try to hurry the hand of God, or become impatient at the seeming delay in the launching of His magnificent plan for a new world with Jesus as the great King. We can afford to wait God's time for the beginning

of His great work, but we *cannot afford to wait* until some more convenient time to begin getting ready for that Day.

Time is of the essence, and it may be later than we think.



If any little word of mine
May make a life the brighter,
If any little song of mine
May make a heart the lighter,
God help me speak the little word,
And take my bit of singing,
And drop it in some lovely vale
To set the echoes ringing.

May every soul that touches mine
Be it the slightest contact, get therefrom some good;
Some little grace, one kindly thought,
One aspiration yet unfelt, one bit of courage for the
darkening sky,
One gleam of faith to brave the thickening ills of life,
One glimpse of brighter skies beyond the gathering mists
To make this life worth while, and Zion a surer heritage.

Use or lose. That is a law of life.

A great musician has said: "If I fail to practice one day, I can tell the difference in my skill; if I fail two days, my close friends can tell; if I neglect my practice three days the whole world will know the difference." We use or lose our talents.

This is true with our physical bodies. I once had a friend who had developed huge muscles of the chest and arms from wrestling. How amazed I was to see his arm after an accident in which he had been carrying the arm in a sling for several weeks! Those strong, sinewy muscles had become infirm.

So it is in the spiritual sphere. We use the gifts and talents God has given us or we lose them. An opportunity for service is a chance for existence. We use or lose!

WHAT BRINGS CONTENTMENT?

Thy Word to me a kingdom is;
Such perfect joy therein I find.
It far exceeds all earthly bliss
That world affords, or grows in mind:
Though nature wants what most men have,
Yet doth Thy Word forbid me crave.

Content I live—this is my stay;
I seek no more than may suffice,
I press to bear no haughty sway;
Look—what I lack Thy Word supplies!
Lo! thus I triumph like a king,
Content with what Thy Word doth bring.

I see how plenty surfeits oft,
And hasty climbers soonest fall;
I see how those that sit aloft
Mishap doth threaten most of all:
These get with toil and keep with fear;
Such cares Thy Truth would never bear.

Are We Losing Our Shine?

A BRITISH POET wrote a poem about a captured crow, in which was a short, but descriptive line. The line thus describes the crow in captivity, "Every day he lost a little shine."

These words could well describe any one of us. Every day that we are a captive to selfishness, or indeed allow ourselves to be in bondage to any trait of ungodliness, we "lose a little shine" of whatever Christian glow we might have come to possess.

When our complaints about life are more than our enthusiasms, when we find something wrong with everything, when we keep harping on our troubles rather than enumerating our blessings, the glow of spiritual life will grow less and less.

Though many and sore were his tribulations, nowhere in any of his letters is there any reference to Paul's complaining because of his many trials and afflictions. No, indeed. His words come ringing down through the ages to us—"rejoice in the Lord alway and again I say, rejoice." He kept under his body and brought it into subjection. His life, wherever he went, was a "constant pageant of triumph in Christ, diffusing the perfume of his knowledge everywhere" by him. He said: "I live for God as the fragrance of Christ breathed alike on those who are being saved and on those who are perishing, to the one a deadly fragrance that makes for death, to the other a vital fragrance that makes for life."

He who was the apostle to us, the Gentiles, had many foes and much evil to contend with, but the rubbing did not produce sparks; it only made him shine the brighter. He said, "Copy me as I copy Christ."

Letting the dull ways of others dull us is evidence that our shining is mere polish only. Our interests and understandings are too shallow; we need to let the light in deeper. The Lord does not ask us to overlook iniquity, but being unduly concerned about another's sin will not light our faces nor remove the tarnish or stains that may have collected on our own souls.

When reproved for a fault, (an absolute necessity to accomplishing serene radiance), the natural tendency is to save face, thereby seeking the honor of men. But when humbly accepting the reproofs and profiting by them, we shine all the way to the Throne of God!

To be congenial, we must not do as some persons suggest, "learn to shrink yourself to the size of the company you are in." That means that one should wear their label; copy the practices of the company he is in, no matter how bad it is! Paul, a more worthy advisor, and much to contrary speaks in unmistakable tones: "be not conformed to this world"—"make no mistake about this, bad company is the ruin of good character." Instead of shrinking ourselves to such smallness, we must grow and expand until we come "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," that in every company and situation we may shine for Him.

"Thou art greatly beloved" were the sweet words spoken to Daniel by the angel Gabriel because of his outstanding character. He was too high, too great to let petty, insignificant or trivial things even find a lodging in his noble mind. He never allowed the things of this life to dull the lustre of his greatness.

Old and young alike can have their conduct shining.

We have the life of Joseph as an example, and how at a tender age he was suddenly removed from protective surroundings of his father's tents and taken into Egypt's slavery, a place where human passions were uncontrolled.

Jesus commanded us to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," and He set the pattern for us to follow. His life was so full of goodness, of being about His Father's business that there was no room for the work of the devil. No bitterness or base passions, no trivialities or turmoil ever found a hiding place in His beautiful life of service to His God and fellowmen. Does it in ours? He rose above all groveling things and heard the sweet words of His Father "this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." We may be sure no spots of hatred or jealousy ever beclouded the perfect image, though He was tempted in all points like as we are.

The radiance of Christians is not merely an outward gloss, but a light that shines from the inmost recesses of the heart. They realize that if they are to shine, they themselves must do the deep polishing.

Jesus did not say to His apostles, chosen to reflect the shining radiance of Himself: *Ye have* the light of the world, rather He said unto them, "*Ye are* the light of the world"! Not that their minds were to store it. Nay. Their lives were to show it! Theirs, it was to be active reflectors of Him whose radiance is rightly termed, "The Sun of righteousness."

Therefore it lies in everyone of us to absorb the beams that the light of life may shine out through us. Thus, we too become of them who are the true light of the world.

If we brighten our corner now, we shall increase in radiance until, at last, our beams shall extend throughout eternity.

Jesus Himself assures us, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

How is our shine? . . . Is it becoming brighter day by day? The Sun and the light is without end!

THE WHISPERING BLOSSOMS

What do the blossoms whisper low
When the gentle breeze is blowing?
Bend and listen and you shall know,
They murmur: "Keep on growing."

Then they breathe from their fragrant lips
"You must shed abroad your sweetness,
And give to others in generous sips,
If you wish for true completeness."

—Sel.



You cannot dream yourself into a character; you must hammer and forge one for yourself.

Forgive us, our Father, for taking our good things for granted, so that we are in danger of losing the fine art of appreciation—make us to be so grateful for the bounties we enjoy that we shall try, by Thy help, to deserve them more.

THE SCIENCE of psychology plays a major role in modern life. Not only in medical science but in the student and business world. I believe there is a system today whereby a desire for study may be created in the youth. Salesmen are trained to create or stimulate purchasing desire in their prospective customers, and executives are being trained to deal with their employees to encourage the best and most efficient service from them. So why in the world should not Christians train themselves likewise to think in terms of victory?

Negative thoughts will never produce positive results. A cheerful, hopeful attitude goes a long way toward conquering obstacles. Let each of us form the habit of always picturing ourselves as an overcomer. This will help us in times of trial and temptation to back up our ambition with the necessary endeavor.

It has been said that a sudden or unexpected joy has been known to produce a reaction that cured even cancer. A Christian has every reason for joy, anticipating heirship with Christ. So why should not this joy produce a reaction in the soul that will cure the cancer of sin?

Both the lives and sayings of all of God's people through the ages have been positive and authoritative. They had conviction of God's Word and promises and their actions were decided and steady, not halfhearted or spasmodic. They knew their goal and pursued it in a straight course. Their stakes were firmly driven, there were no "if's" or questionable plans for them, no variation of purpose.

The same prize is still being offered. Let us think only in terms of victory, making no provision for the flesh. When we open the door to Victory, doubt will sneak out.

Thinking Victory

A firm resolve that we will win at all costs and we are on the way; a consistent perseverance in the rough places of life increases our strength and this encourages us to keep on until we reach the heights. We may have many lessons to learn but shall never be defeated unless we lose courage. In other words we are bound to be victorious if we do not *think* defeat! The saints meditate righteousness on their beds. They make preparations for victory.

Sin has to actually be encountered and dealt with, it is not all a mental attitude, like the hungry man that dreamed he ate but when he awoke his soul had appetite; but victory *starts* in the mind. It is easier to win and we are more sure to win when we are determined to do so.

Victorious thinking will result in victorious living. Jesus taught the lesson that all evil results from evil thought, so by the same token virtue would spring from virtuous, victorious thinking.

By having it in my mind to be an overcomer, I am thinking more of the promises, they are vital to me, for I am anticipating participation in them. They are mine, I am living my life now in vivid expectation of them. So things of earth neither have the attraction nor cause the distraction they otherwise would.

Anticipating them thus we will be squaring our lives with the Record to make sure we are covering all the ground, knowing full well that victory is based on solid endeavor.

The Drama of Life

REPEATEDLY FOUND inscribed upon the pagan Roman tombs were seven letters, "NF-F-NS-N." Deciphered they were found to represent Latin words which when translated, revealed the brave futility of the pagan understanding of life. "I was not, I was, I am not, I do not care."

No Christian could ever say of his life, "I do not care." He cares because it is his conviction that the role which the Almighty has placed him here to play is meant as a preparation for the main drama which is yet to come. He who fails to play his part here, cannot expect to be given the more exacting and rewarding part which God has for him in the vast theater of eternity.

All about us we see enacted the tragedy of wasted lives. Their understanding of the purpose of life is as hopeless as it was in the days of pagan Rome. Millions are traveling down the broad way to destruction, stumbling on in the darkness of a self-directed life. Many are able to acquire riches, fame and honor, as they pass over the stage of life, but when they reach the end of the way, nothing more awaits them. None of their achievements will be able to outwit the King of Terrors. Their riches will not purchase an extra moment of time. Their honor, which may win a glowing tribute inscribed on a monument, will profit nought when they have passed into oblivion,—to "be as though they had not been."

God's drama of life is a divine plan on life's great stage, where all who cherish the hope of obtaining some-

thing beyond this short scene must enter and play his part as God directs through His Word. We have been called to play our part in a world of chaos; for socially and politically all the world is corrupt. To rise above its influence and build up a faith that will carry us through to the end, is a work that must be accomplished if we play our part well in this drama of life.

Our God is merciful and just and will not call us to do a work we are not capable of doing. Whether our talents are many or few, whether we are called to the front or center of the stage, or lost in the scenery near the wings, God requires us to do our best. And our best is little in comparison to the inheritance promised by Jesus, if we follow His example and endure to the end. He passed over the stage of life before us, and we find as we study the record of His career that the secret of His success was His ability to keep ever in mind the great reward, the joy which would be His portion for being faithful to the end.

We hear His voice as He warns everyone who follows Him that the taking up of the cross would be a daily experience, a battleground would arise within our own hearts. There would be scenes of struggle, of constant warfare between what we naturally are and what we have an ambition to become. Only the help of God through His Word can free us from ourselves and give us the strength to overcome our fleshly imperfections. From the lips of Jesus comes the glorious promise: "To him that

overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3: 21). To be worthy of this honor is the ambition of everyone who is striving to play the role of a true Christian in this drama of life. God has furnished all the counsel needed to make this ambition a glorious reality. A great inheritance has been left us, the knowledge and example of how to do a great work well; and it is comforting to know He has promised time and help to those who are putting forth their best efforts to act in harmony with His Word.

Scenes in the drama of life are shifting fast, and the fine art of a Christian is to know when to act, when to speak, when to stand still and wait. Great careers are never won the easy way, and to be a truly successful actor in God's sight will require study, practice and self-denial. The apostle James declares, "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." Our important work is to look into this perfect law of liberty and continue looking until its influence will be manifested in what we do and say.

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" is the instruction of the apostle Paul. To stand ready for instant action, and be compelled to quietly wait for the signal to appear on the stage is a part of the training of every actor. "In your patience possess ye your souls," are the words from the lips of Jesus. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart," says the Psalmist. A Christian must be fortified with strength and courage, to stand up for this conviction to acknowledge God's Word before an unbelieving world.

A writer once outlined the conduct of a perfect life in these words,

"Be such a man, and live such a life
That if every man were such as you
And every life a life like yours
This earth would be God's paradise."

This is the goal of every Christian, to so do his or her part in this drama of life, that he or she will be worthy to live when the stage will be earth made over into the paradise of God, and the curtain rises nevermore to drop, terminating the sublime scene.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us bind on closer the shield of faith, and trusting God for needed strength to endure, press on, determined to win in this warfare against sin and self. Then when the curtain falls and we make our exit, our life will not have been lived in vain, but we will be worthy of having our names written in the "Lamb's book of life." Then in that grand final scene, when the Judge sits on His great white throne, and the books are opened, we will be called to stand on His right with the radiant throng who have made themselves fit to survive by acting perfectly the role of a Christian as they passed over the stage of life.



If one's mind is filled with memories and reminiscences instead of anticipation, then the goal of life eternal is not his. That goal is future!

A Healthy Shadow

IN ACTS 5: 15 we read of the apostles' activities in the early church: "They brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them."

The Christian movement, having gained fresh impetus, the first Christian church had begun to take form. The dominant figure of leadership was Peter, the man who had, but a short time before, denied his Master, a man whose faith and courage once was at low ebb, but now he was full of power, and of the spirit of God.

It was on the day of Pentecost, when Peter delivered that powerful sermon, that there began to be an awakening in the regions about Jerusalem, so much so that 3000 souls were joined to the church in one day. Word traveled fast that Christ's apostles had been given the power of healing. And it was in that healing ministry that Peter played a busy part. Crowds flocked to the temple to get in contact with him. So much did they long for this contact that they brought their sick, and laid them on the streets on beds and couches, in the hope that as Peter passed, though he did not stop, his shadow might brush across them and leave them improved. We have no record that Peter's shadow ever actually healed anyone, but here is a point from which we can draw a lesson.

Peter was a man known to many around. They knew that here was a man who was living a life different from that of his fellows; here was a man whose character showed his relationship with God. They knew that he had a higher power governing him. So different was he that they thought there might be healing in his shadow. Yes, this is the picture of a man with a healthy shadow.

That was the kind of shadow that Peter cast, but let us ask what kind of a shadow are you throwing; what kind am I throwing? What is our shadow? It is none other than our example or influence. And whatever our influence or example, it will be as the shadow of our character. A bad person cannot help diffusing a bad influence, neither can a good person help exerting a good influence.

We, who have been called into this narrow way of righteousness are responsible to God for our deeds and words. We are responsible for our example and influence. We are responsible for the kind of shadow we are extending. How necessary then for us to see to it that ours is a healthy shadow. A shadow that will profile our relationship with God, a shadow that will eventually portray a perfect character.

This shadow is not something we can detach from ourselves or run away from; it is a very part of us, even as the little girl who first learned that she had a shadow. Her father sat on the porch one day, and seeing her playing so happily in the yard, offered her a dollar if she would leave her shadow out in the yard and come and sit by him. So she put sticks on it, and rocks on it and ran away swiftly, but there was no use. Where she went, her shadow went. And so with us. We cannot leave it behind and say "I will not throw a shadow; I will not be responsible for my misconduct." For where we go that shadow goes, and that shadow is a true silhouette of what we are.

It should be our constant aim that ours shall be a
(Continued on page 11)

Meditations

On the Word

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom" (Ps. 51: 6).

On first thought, this would seem to be a perfectly natural attitude for the professing Christ-follower, to have truth in his heart, and to be truth-loving in every way. But as we study the text, it presents a more difficult situation. A person might not countenance lies or liars concerning anything temporal, yet, at the same time, might be a long way from having deep in his heart, the truth here referred to. Truth is the quality or state of being true. It is verity—the quality of a thing that is exactly what it purports to be; it is in complete accordance with the facts, thus to have truth in the inward parts, we must be true to God and keep every one of His commands.

This is a reasonable demand; wherein then does the difficulty lie? Inner honesty is often highly inconvenient, and many do not want to pay the price. It may demand a good deal of moral courage to refuse to be swayed by popular opinion. It may require readiness to sacrifice when personal advantages lie in one direction, while the voice of right calls in the opposite direction. When fidelity exacts a fearful price, then it is easy to stifle it by saying: "Oh, why try to be so different? If all these other people say it is right, your conscience must be wrong." In that very moment we start lying to ourselves for the sake of our own comfort, forgetting that the thing God desires is "truth in the inward parts."

Desiring truth in the inward parts requires a most strenuous work on the part of the person striving to reach that point, and is only accomplished by walking uprightly and working righteousness.

To crave truth in the inmost being is to desire loyalty; it is to desire truth more than excuses, more than coverings up.

Dr. Moffatt renders this verse as follows: "Tis inward truth that thou desirest; grant me then wisdom in my secret heart." If truth, or God's wisdom abides below the obvious, the surface, deep in our hearts, it will work within us until we see what manner of persons we are. When we see the many spiritual sores with which we are covered, we will go about seeking a way to rid ourselves of this affliction. Having assured ourselves that God will be true to His Word, we read of our natural selves: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." We need to be taught the law of God that we may discern the evil from the good.

We ask, What then is good? "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah 6: 8). We now see there is more to desiring truth in the inward parts than at first appeared on the surface. The prophet Zechariah will give

us the formula: "These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of peace and truth in your gates; and let none of you imagine evil in his heart against his neighbor; and love no false oath" (ch. 8: 16).

Desiring truth in the inward parts teaches there is a work to be performed which is much opposed to the ways of the natural mind. If we speak every man truth to his neighbor, there will be only that spoken which will strengthen faith in the eternal God. If we execute peace and judgment in our gates, we will never be swayed by prejudice or sympathy but we will stand on the facts in the case. And to love no false oath is much deeper than falsifying in court. We say we believe God and will obey all His precepts, but do our lips and lives agree? When something very trying crosses our pathway or someone is very rude and hateful, do we always remember to return good for evil and let a soft answer turn away wrath, or do we give a cutting retort forgetting the words of the apostle James to "Let patience have her perfect work"?

In working this righteousness, there is great necessity of our constantly speaking the truth. Audible truth is not always necessary; the old adage: "Actions speak louder than words," is to be remembered here, and this, the prophet Samuel confirms in saying that by God, actions are weighed. This acting the truth and speaking the truth is only accomplished through the longing desire to have truth working within.

The result of this work will be a tongue and life established in the truth.

To support the inward verity for which he prayed, the Psalmist added further petition for inward wisdom. The American Translation gives us the thought of confidence in God's wisdom. "The confidence of wisdom thou dost make me know." In every avenue of life we find wisdom a most necessary asset and it is surely no less necessary in the plan of the Almighty. Job tells us that this wisdom must be imparted and how we must apply it: "I will fetch my knowledge from afar," and the wise man finishes by adding, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee (Prov 2: 10, 11).

We find the knowledge then which is in the hidden parts, is the knowledge of God; it is not found in the archives of the learned of this world but in the unfailing Word of God. It will not only give us knowledge of ourselves but if we live out this knowledge or wisdom of God, it will bring happiness to our days, and in the end long life to enjoy that happiness in.

Reading again our text, we find it to be, in the words of a current commentator, a "corrective of the idea of original sin. If truth is what God desires, in the inward being, i. e., the essence of the soul, original sin is not according to his will. Sin therefore is not God's choice for man; it is man's choice for himself."

Inward truth: it is the true doctrine of the gospel. Truth is opposed to hypocrisy—dissimulation, formality; it is joined to mercy and kindness.

To have truth in the inmost being brings chain reaction. Truth expands as light, and He who is the "Light of the world," says "he that followeth me . . . shall have the light of Life."

There it is: inward *truth*, heavenly *light*—endless *life*!

Questions and Answers



"Why do you date your Messages and Bible School Notes 1961 or whatever the year may be, on January 1st, and when you celebrate the true Christmas and New Year [in the spring] you speak of a new year just begun?"

Records and business dates must of necessity employ the calendar of the civil year. The only alternative would be to list two dates, the civil and the sacred. This would be needlessly cumbersome.

"In Hebrews 4:8 it reads, 'For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.' I do not know if I get the meaning or not. Does this mean that, as long as he did not say remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy, that he did not appoint another day to worship? and left it up to the powers that be to establish the day of worship?"

The author of Hebrews was here referring to the rest given to the children of Israel when they settled in the land of Canaan, and comparing it with the greater Day of rest when, as the result of divine administration through Jesus and His saved ones, and at the close of the one-thousand-year millennial Day, our planet will roll forth as a finished product, filled with God's glory, permanently annexed to heaven.

The Greek word translated "Jesus" in Heb. 4:8 should have been rendered Joshua. It is so noted in the margin of any reference Bible, and the newer versions all use the word Joshua. Joshua and Jesus stem from the same Greek word, and the translators chose the wrong name. The context in the historic sketch in which the name "Jesus" occurs clearly identifies it with Joshua.

Hebrews 4 has no reference to the seventh day Sabbath only as it is used as a background from which to project the coming of the greater Sabbath, the eternal Day of rest.

"What does the Megiddo Mission Church think about Social Security? Is it right for people to take Social Security monthly benefits?"

Yes, there could be nothing sinful about accepting Social Security monthly payments. It is an aid provided by our Federal Government, and the individual has the right to accept of it. Viewed from another angle it may prove a curse in disguise in relieving the public of responsibility and personal initiative, and could lead to state socialism. There is always a segment of the population who find it easier to lean than to lift. Social Security could encourage this trend, but there are many cases where help is deserved, needed and appreciated, and where no unfair advantage is taken.

"In Gen. 9:21 it says Noah got drunk on wine. In II Pet. 2:5 Peter called Noah a preacher of righteousness. Please explain."

Both statements are true. Character building is a process, and God does not require of a spokesman for Him that he reach the high standard of perfection of

character before he can be used for that purpose. The competitor for the prize of immortal life must reach perfection before his life ends. We can be confident that Noah accomplished this outstanding feat. We have no record of his becoming drunk again. The real danger in any sin is that we put off banishing it from our lives until it is too late, so that the end of our day of salvation by the termination of our mortal life or the personal return of Christ the great Judge, finds us with our work unfinished. Paul is definite: "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation."

A Healthy Shadow

(Continued from page 8)

healthy shadow, one that we will not be ashamed to cast on others. Though we may be all unconscious of it, we may be the only Bible that some persons read.

What are some of the bodies that cast healthy shadows? First, we might mention happiness. Sprinkle it on others and you get some on yourself. Many things in life have a bright and a dark side. If we choose to dwell on the dark side, it will be impossible to cast a vivid shadow, for it takes light to produce shadow. Dwelling on the dark side of life is bound to sour our disposition so that we will spread gloom; but if we look on the bright side, our temper and disposition will become more buoyant, and though we may not realize it, others may be wishing in their hearts that they could be near us to be healed by such a happy shadow.


Faith could be said to be another element in a healthy shadow. What causes faith to increase? Paul tells us it is the Word of God. And we might add that never-failing support, prayer, also will strengthen and stimulate faith. In these trying times of the last days everyone needs to have more faith. Does it not strengthen you as you feel the shadow of one strong in the faith, one who has been to the throne of God and is daily thinking faith, talking faith and acting faith? If you are lacking faith, draw a little nearer and perhaps that healthy shadow will fall on you.

A person with kindness, love and humility, cannot keep from casting a healing shadow. Be a little kinder every day to those around you, even kinder than necessary, that your shadow may show that you have a higher power dwelling within and invigorating you.


Peace and contentment surely add to the making of a healing shadow. "Great peace have they which love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." "Godliness with contentment is great gain." This virtue is well worth every effort to obtain. What is your attitude when spoken to harshly? Does your shadow cast a profile of revenge, or send out a calm and peaceful attitude that nothing can offend? Surely it is the soft answer that has the healing shadow. What a healthy shadow we can have if it is our determination to make it so.

There can be no healing in our shadow unless we have within us the attributes necessary to create an atmosphere of healing. Let us check the shadow that our passing extends across our families, our friends. What kind of an atmosphere do you create? What takes place in your shadow—and mine?

Start Where You Stand



Start where you stand and never mind the past . . . The past won't help you in beginning new . . . If you have left it all behind at last . . . Why that's enough, you're done with it, you're through . . . This is another chapter in the book . . . This is another race that you have planned . . . Don't give the vanished days a backward look . . . Start where you stand . . . You need not care about your old defeats . . . If you start anew and win success . . . The future is your time, and time is fleet . . . And there is much of work and strain and stress . . . Forget the buried woes and dead despairs . . . Here is a brand new trial right at hand . . . The future is for him who does and dares . . . Start where you stand . . . Old failures will not halt, old triumphs aid . . . Today's the thing, tomorrow soon will be . . . Get in the fight and face it, unafraid . . . And leave the past to ancient history . . . What has been, has been; yesterday is dead . . . And by it you are neither blessed nor banned . . . Take courage, man, be brave and drive ahead . . . Start where you stand!



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